Provision of STD/ISD/FAX Facilities in Villages

†146. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in different parts of the country where Telephone/STD/ISD/FAX facility is still not available;

(b) by when these services would be provided to all these villages which are deprived of above facilities; and

(c) the effective steps are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) As on 30-9-2005, 53,744 number of villages are remaining to be provided by Village Public Telephones (VPTs). This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc.

(b) These remaining villages be provided VPTs by November, 2007.

(c) To improve the rural connectivity, following steps have been taken:—

(i) Providing Village Telephones (VPTs) in a time bound manner in all the remaining uncovered villages having population less than 100 lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infrested areas etc;

(ii) Providing Rural Community Phones (RCPs) in a time bound manner in vIllages with population more than 2000 and where there are no PCO ;

(iii) Replacement of Multi Access Radio (MARR) VPTs;

(iv) Provision of individual rural phone connections (RDELs) on demand in 1,685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) with support from USO Fund by January, 2006.

Spread of Broadband Policy

147. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recently asked Government to accept its suggestions regarding the spread of broadband in the country;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of the suggestions made by TRAI in this regard and those so far accepted by Government;

(c) the suggestions proposed to be accepted shortly, the time likely to be taken therefor; and

(d) the suggestions not accepted by Government and the reasons therefor in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Telecome Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) have recently sent a communication to the Government recommending that Government should conduct a review of various provisions of Broadband Policy and should have reconsiderations of TRAI's earlier recommendations pertaining to Local Loop unbundling and fiscal incentives for Broadband. However, the suggestions made by TRAI are under examination.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Amendment in I.T. Act

148. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government are going to bring amendments to IT Act to ensure data security and customer protection;

(b) whether Government has identified any areas where the amendments are required to IT Act; and

(c) if so, the details of the areas identified?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The Information Technology Act, 2000 provides for elaborate legal framework for data security protection in the country. The Section 43, 66 and 72 covers data security and data protection.

(b) The Expert Committee set up by the Department of Information Technology to review the IT Act, 2000 has suggested a number of amendments in the Act.